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S/P - Mr. Bowie

The record of conversations held during the Secretary's recent trip to the Near East and South Asia makes interesting reading. The attached paper contains selected statements from memoranda made of his conversations with foreign officials during this trip. The statements I have selected record views of the Secretary on problems of the area visited as well as on some problems more general in nature.

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U.S. DEFENSE EFFORT

We have abandoned the concept of the year of greatest peril, that is, building up to peak effort with the idea that some particular year will be the critical one. The Eisenhower theory is that one can't determine the year of greatest peril and that our military effort must therefore be constant and long range. One of the greatest dangers is that overemphasis will wreck the economies of the free world. That would, in fact, be the year of greatest danger. (Lebanon 5:3)[1]

If today the United States is cutting expenditures, both for our own defense effort and for foreign aid, in order to balance our budget, it is not that we think that the peril is over but that we must put ourselves in a position to maintain our defensive effort for a long time. The productive capacity of the United States is so tremendous that we can maintain strength without endangering our economy and risking inflation. (Turkey 10:3)

The United States feels a twofold responsibility: (a) it is necessary to maintain a strong military establishment, and (b) it is necessary to maintain unity among the non-Communist countries so that they do not fall into the Communist trap. (Lebanon 5/3:2)

DISARMAMENT

I stated the President had already taken action which could, if the Soviet responded, end the so-called armament race. He had cut Truman's defense budget on the theory of having a military establishment compatible with economic health rather than based on arms to match the Soviet military establishment. If the Soviet would cut its military budget in accordance with the same principle applying more of its economic productivity to the welfare of the people and less to armament then a start to reverse the present trend would have been made, and this might be more productive than the disarmament conference which had almost assuredly bogged down in attempting an impossible task of trying to evaluate mechanistically the various military potentials. (India 8:2)

SOVIET

1/ Reference indicates country in which statement was made as well as number and page of memorandum quoted.

SOVIET POLICY

We do not see in the present Soviet moves any basic change in their policy or in their strategy which is to attempt to rule the world. We interpret their present moves as an effort to gain time by appearing to make concessions in order to increase their strength. Present tactics are calculated to counteract the policies of our present administration which are more vigorous toward certain areas of the world. In the Far East, Middle East and Europe, the United States is moving forward more vigorously. The present effort of the USSR constitutes an attempt to thwart this activity by attempting to prove peaceful intentions. Although we believe that under Divine Providence it is possible for the worst sinner to repent, and must be willing to keep an open mind, we must not accept the Soviets at their face value until their actions prove their words. (Turkey 10:2)

The tactical shift of the Soviets to a peace offensive seemed designed to divide the free world. If the Soviets could succeed in dividing the free powers and get them to quarrel and fight among themselves, they doubtless believed that they could realize their dream of world revolution without resorting to overt aggression. In connection with their attempts to divide the free world, it was important to bear in mind Chapter 8 of Stalin's book on Leninism dealing with the exploitation of nationalism in dependent areas. (Pakistan 9/5:1)

Operations of the Soviet world under a single will is not only a source of strength but is also a point of weakness, since those subjected to a single will become themselves incapable of independent, resourceful action in case of emergency. (Turkey 10/1:8)

EGYPT

The US has a real enthusiasm for the new regime in Egypt which has done so much to introduce honesty into public life. Egypt is the country in the Middle East which, under the leadership and guidance of the Prime Minister, contains the promise of a great future. President Eisenhower himself has high regard for the Prime Minister and what he is doing. The President believes that the Prime Minister is giving exactly the

kind

kind of leadership which has been lacking in the Arab world for so long. President Eisenhower would like closer ties with Egypt in the military and economic spheres. If arms and economic help are justified in the case of Egypt, and if Egypt itself desires these things from the US, the US would be prepared to consider making the Egyptian Army a real force in the world. The US cannot equip Egyptians to fight the British.

What happens in Egypt is up to the Egyptians. The US cannot dictate to Egypt. Power must come from the people themselves. (Egypt 1/1:6,7)

SUEZ BASE

The US agreed with the UK that there must be a prompt change in the situation which would recognize the sovereignty of Egypt over the Suez Base in theory as well as in fact. The change in the status of the base should not affect its usability in war on short notice. No one could afford to have a power vacuum in the Base. President Eisenhower sent the Prime Minister word that he thought the greatest care should be taken not to destroy the utility of the Suez Base which is such a major deterrent to aggression against the Middle East. The President felt that impetuousness must not be allowed to interfere with the operation of the Base. This base system is the only effective deterrent in the area today. In sum, it is the US feeling that: (a) British troops should evacuate and Egyptian sovereignty should be fully restored; (b) the present mechanics for the defense of the area (i.e., the Base) should not lapse even for an interim period. (Egypt 1/1:8)

U.S.-U.K. RELATIONS

The US is not ashamed of its close ties of alliance with the UK and makes no effort to disguise these ties. Sometimes the US has its differences with the UK but these it tries to solve quietly. The US does not automatically accept British policy. The US and UK do agree on general broad principles. We share with the UK cultural and religious traditions and these give us a similar point of view on most problems while maintaining the right to exercise in all instances entirely independent judgment. (Egypt 1/1:7)

The US

The US has no desire to back the UK in "imperialism" or "Colonialism". The US wants to see Egypt free. (Egypt 1/2:3)

ARAB STATES AND ISRAEL

Arabs feel Roosevelt and Truman Administration so subject to Jewish influence that Arab viewpoint ignored. Decisions often taken under pressure United States-Jewish groups which felt they had right exercise influence because of contributions to election victory. New Administration was elected by overwhelming vote of American people as whole and neither owes that type of political debt to any segment nor believes in building power by cultivating particular segments of populations. President Eisenhower believed that while United States policy must continue support for Israel as great creative achievement which has evoked sympathy of American people, must also make Arabs realize United States concern for them. (Israel 2/1:2,3)

The Secretary said in Israel he had spoken quite frankly to Prime Minister Ben Gurion and Foreign Minister Sharrett, informing them that United States policy is determined to restore the confidence of the Arab states. He said he had stated frankly that the United States would not carry out a policy partial to Israel and that the United States would not indefinitely finance Israel immigration. This latter policy, according to the Secretary, is already having a stabilizing effect for Israel's immigration has tapered off to where it is almost as low as Israel's emigration. On the issue of the Arabs' fearing Israeli expansion, the Secretary indicated that the United States Government is prepared to consider measures and concert action to prevent aggression by Israel. (Lebanon 5/1:3)

Secretary Dulles said he wished to give the strongest and most categorical assurance that the United States is opposed to any expansion of the existing Israeli frontiers. The United States does not favor Israel at the expense of Syria or the other Arab states. (Syria 4/1:4)

The United States Government should consider some form of guarantee against Israeli expansion.

Something

Something should be done to create a military balance between the Arabs and Israelis. Israel is now much the stronger which in itself is an inducement to aggression. He realized also that by building up Arab military potential, we run the risk of stoking the fires for a second round against the Israelis. Formal peace is not possible in the near future. It will have to come bit by bit, gradually. (Lebanon 5/5:4)

MILITARY AID

The purpose of military aid is to assist countries which feel threatened to defend themselves from aggression. This means that one element related to United States military assistance is that the United States be confident that Syria would not attack Israel and at the same time to give greater confidence to Syria that Israel will not attack it. (Syria 4/1:4)

MIDDLE EAST DEFENSE

The Middle East Defense Organization, which was a plan for Middle East defense invented some two years ago, has not proven to be any good. Too many states not part of the area and too many states in the area who are more interested in quarrelling over Israel and the Suez Base than the defense of the area were included in the original plan. We still hope, however, that the Arabs can gradually be brought into an association with you [Turkey] and with us. I admit that the immediate situation is gloomy. However, it is possible that the Arabs will change their view and that we can make them change. The area they occupy is so important that we must not abandon our efforts. (Turkey 10:3, 7)

It was evident that there was a desire for collective defense in this area and that supplying military equipment for collective defense in this area was easier than supplying each country separately. The program for the Middle East defense as it had been submitted did not mean that it must be accepted in the way it was presented. The whole aim of the project was to defend the area. It was up to the states of the area to come to an understanding on the way of defending the Middle East. The United States was motivated by the desire to unite the different small states in order that they could defend themselves collectively. America hoped that such collective cooperation

for defending

for defending the area would be increased and America did not state, as a condition for offering arms to these countries, that they must accept the idea of a defense project. However, any collective cooperation among these states would help in complying with the demands for military equipment. (Saudi Arabia 7/2:5,6)

We had no preconceived or frozen ideas as to the form such a regional defense set-up might take. However, one thing seemed clear. This was that such an organization must have its roots in the area itself. No outside countries, no matter how friendly and well disposed, could present a blueprint and expect the countries of the region to accept it automatically. To succeed it must have the solid support of countries in the area and they must believe that their interests are best served by getting together and creating greater strength through collective action than they could have by each acting independently of the other. No country had sufficient strength to defend itself if it stood alone. (Pakistan 9/5:1)

Security in this area should be sought in ways whereby the people of the area would themselves be primarily responsibl . No collective scheme could be imposed from without. (Lebanon 5/3:3)

The Secretary said that he would fully accept the point of view expressed by the Prime Minister that Turkey would have to be the backbone of any such organization or of plans for the defense of the area. (Turkey 10/1:8)

JERUSALEM

The US continues to advocate some kind of international status for the city. (Jordan 3/3:1)

Some formula might be devised not wholly excluding the political authority of Israel and Jordan but establishing some sort of international control there. (Lebanon 5/1:3)

Full internationalization of Jerusalem would require troops which we are not willing to commit. Therefore, some sort of international control other than outright internationalization appears most practical. (Lebanon 5/5:4)

ARAB

ARAB REFUGEES

Power and water projects in Jordan, he thought, would assist in solving the refugee problem as would pasturage in Syria. Refugee projects should be carefully linked with economic aid for the indigenous populations for otherwise if anything at all is done for the refugees they would be better off than many of the native inhabitants. There were many concrete ways in which the United States could aid the situation. It will not be possible to make everybody happy, but the United States would do the best it could. (Lebanon 5/1:3)

OIL

Some people believe that the US has an inescapable interest in the Middle East because of oil. The truth is that the US has surplus oil from Venezuela and can do without Middle Eastern oil. This does not affect, however, the temptation which the great Middle Eastern oil reserves are to the Soviet Union. (Egypt 1/1:8,9)

COLONIALISM

The US does not believe in colonialism. The US freed the Philippines and gave up special rights that it had one time possessed in Cuba. The US does not believe that certain peoples and races have the right to determine the fate of other peoples. (Egypt 1/1:7)

The United States Government is exerting strong influence in favor of colonial and dependent people. (Lebanon 5/1:3)

I said that the US was faithful to its traditions in these /colonial/ matters and would like nothing better than to work openly for political liberty, but that we did not feel that we could afford an open break with the British and French. (India 8/2:2)

TURKEY

The Secretary commented that of all of our allies he believed that Turkey had the greatest awareness of the fundamental problem which confronts the free world, and the staunchest heart with which to meet it. He said that we were very proud to have this association with Turkey and expressed the hope that we would play a worthy part in it; he was confident that Turkey would always play a worthy part. (Turkey 10/1:11)

YUGOSLAVIA

YUGOSLAVIA

He said that he was much impressed with what the Prime Minister had to say regarding further steps to integrate Yugoslavia into NATO. He stated that he could not at this time indicate the United States position upon that problem, except to say that he had an open mind and that there was now in his mind the point of view which the Prime Minister had expressed. He commented that there were several practical considerations which must be taken into account, some of which the Prime Minister had mentioned: (1) the relationship of Yugoslavia and Italy, which should be improved by a settlement of the Trieste matter; (2) the attitude of the Scandinavian countries, which feel that too much attention is being given to Southern Europe and not enough to the North, and (3) our own public opinion in the United States, which is still disturbed by certain religious aspects of communist policy in Yugoslavia. He pointed out these problems not as insuperable obstacles but as elements which have to be taken into account in making a decision upon this matter. (Turkey 10/1:9)